Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (currently amended) An end-effector device for use with an electrosurgical instrument for performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure, the end-effector device comprising:

an electrode;

a mechanism for coupling the electrode to an electrosurgical instrument;

an insulative rigid sleeve disposed at least partially around the electrode so as to inhibit surface conduction of electrical current flowing from the electrode to the electrosurgical instrument; and

a pair of ~~at least one~~ internal sealing rings compressed against inner distal and proximal ends of the insulative rigid sleeve and disposed so as to inhibit fluid from entering into an interior of the insulative rigid sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during a minimally invasive surgical procedure.

2. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the electrode comprises a scalpel blade, a beaver blade, a hook, a spatula, movable jaws, scissors, a needle point, hockey stick, dissectors, or a probe.

3. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the electrode transmits radiofrequency energy during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

4. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism provides for removable coupling of the device with the electrosurgical instrument.

5. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism comprises a mechanical attachment.

6. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 5, wherein the mechanical attachment includes threading within the insulative rigid sleeve for attachment with complementary threading on a mating component of the electrosurgical instrument.

7. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 5, wherein the mechanical attachment includes at least one spring tab or latching member for attachment with at least one protrusion within a housing of the electrosurgical instrument.

8. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism comprises an electrical attachment.

9. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector for electrical connection with a transmission member via a spring member of the electrosurgical instrument.

10. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector for electrical connection with a transmission member via a gripping member of the electrosurgical instrument.

11. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector having an electrical tab

for electrical connection with a transmission member via an electrical platform of the electrosurgical instrument.

12. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein [[the]] at least one of the pair of internal sealing rings comprises an ~~at least one~~ o-ring.

13. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the end-effector device is constructed so as to be disposable.

14. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism is configured so as to be incapable of re-coupling to the electrosurgical instrument after once being coupled to and uncoupled from the electrosurgical instrument.

15. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism effectively permanently couples the device with the electrosurgical instrument.

16. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 1, further comprising an insulation layer disposed at least partially around the electrode and one of the pair of ~~at least one~~ internal sealing rings so as to additionally inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative rigid sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

17. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 16, wherein the insulation layer comprises ceramic material, glass, silicone, polypropylene, fluoropolymer, or insulating plastic.

18. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 17, wherein the insulative rigid sleeve comprises ceramic material, glass, silicone, polypropylene, fluoropolymer, or insulating plastic.

19. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 17, wherein the insulation layer comprises a first insulation material completely encircling part of the electrode, and wherein the insulative rigid sleeve comprises a second insulation material completely encircling the first insulation material and abutting the electrosurgical instrument.

Claims 20-48 (canceled).

49. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an end-effector device for use with an electrosurgical instrument for performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure, comprising: disposing an insulative rigid sleeve at least partially around an electrode so as to inhibit surface conduction of electrical current flowing from the electrode to an electrosurgical instrument when the end-effector is coupled to the electrosurgical instrument; and disposing a pair of ~~at least one~~ internal sealing rings within the insulative rigid sleeve and around the electrode so as to be compressed against inner distal and proximal ends of the insulative rigid sleeve and inhibit fluid from entering into an interior of the insulative rigid sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during a minimally invasive surgical procedure.

50. (currently amended) The method as in claim 49, further comprising: disposing an insulation layer at least partially around the electrode and one of the pair of ~~at least one~~ internal sealing rings so as to additionally inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative rigid sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

Claims 51-52 (canceled).